

WINTER FOOD CACHING BY MOUNTAIN BEAVERS (*Aplodontia rufa*) IN A GIRDLED DOUGLAS-FIR STAND. J.P. Farley and D.L. Campbell. USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Olympia, WA.

Girdling of basal stems and roots of Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) causes excessive tree mortality in managed plantations. Vegetation used by mountain beavers is being determined in a 15-year old stand with basal stem diameters of about 18 cm and canopy coverage of about 72% (SD 30%) near burrow systems prior to tree thinning. To locate food caches, 6 g radio transmitters were attached to sword fern bundles taken by mountain beavers. Cached vegetation recovered in February 1991 was compared with available surface plants within about 9 m of food caches of six burrow systems. Sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) and Oregon grape (*Berberis nervosa*) were the three major species of thirteen species recovered from food caches and were the dominant surface species. Respective percentages of food cache plants by weight vs ground coverage were: sword fern 34.9% (SD 25.4%) vs 36.4% (SD 20.0%); salal 32.4% (SD 20.0%) vs 47.7% (SD 29.6%), and Oregon grape 8.5% (SD 9.5%) vs 31.8% (SD 35.0%). Percentages of sword fern and salal cached appeared closely related to their availability.